

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

As a source of information and entertainment, Sinclair has an obligation to its viewers to present an unbiased and balanced view of current issues. By all means, air an anti-Kerry program; it is part of one's First Amendment rights to voice one's opinion. However, such a media powerhouse should follow such a program with a pro-Kerry program so as to present a balanced view of the issue. The vast majority of American citizens, who are a vital part of our democratic republic, get their news from television programs. Let's all work together to be sure the public is fully informed and able to make choices based on all the facts, to take part in an informed democracy.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.